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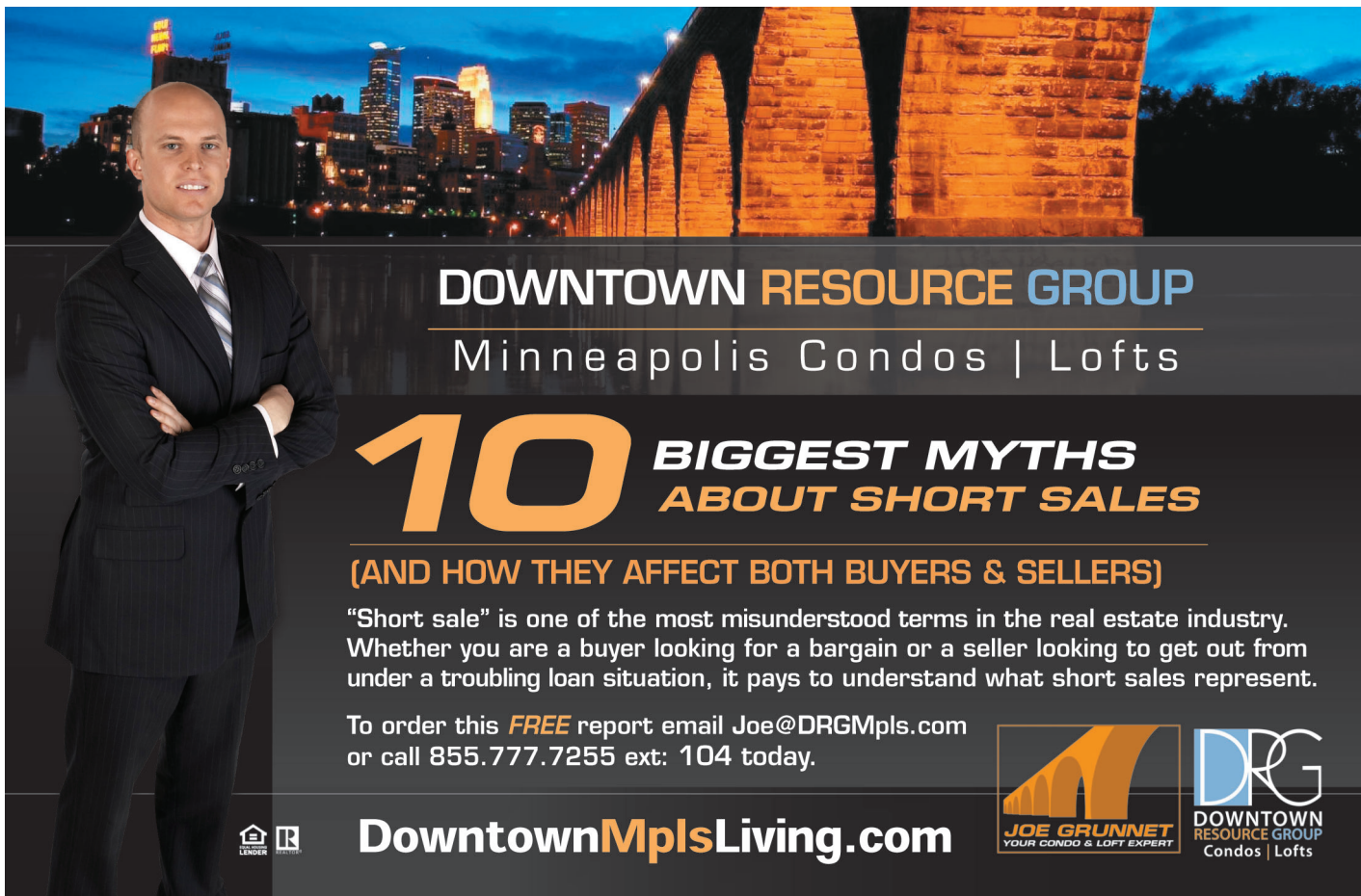
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Photo by Tom Maloney

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Send all your calendar events to Linda@lavendermagazine.com


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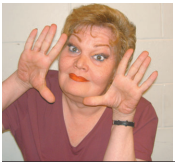
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Slouching Toward 2012: I Resolve...



It may seem a bit late to be discussing New Year's resolutions, but they never should be undertaken in a holiday haze of eggnog and Jack Daniel's—the euphoria of mercantile excess. They better are considered in the promising dawn of the New than the receding accusations of the Old.

How exactly to craft your commitment to the Universe? What to take on, tackling not too much as to fail, yet not so little as to invite ridicule?

"I will write more on my novel" is grand, but metastasizes to grandiosity in the cold light of the reality that you didn't write a line in 2010. "More"? Typing "Chapter 2" neither will hold up in your inner Court of Ethics, nor survive the beady-eyed scrutiny of those who know your nugatory work habits.

As you read this, we'll be well into the first month of an already-diminished 2011, so you can take some relief in realizing by starting this late to make a resolution, you already have that many fewer days to fail.

So, take out your pad and pencil. If you still use either of those tools, you just might resolve to cave in, and buy a smart phone. Then, learn to use it.

If that was last year's resolution, and the thing's interred in your kitchen junk drawer, pick up your pencil, grit your teeth, and note what level of resolution you wish to achieve: "Stellar"? "Outstanding"? "Capable"? "Competent"? Perhaps "Adequate" is a more sanguine choice.

But adequate at what? The reason people announce a New Year's resolution is not to improve themselves, but to have moral, higher-ground-than-thou bragging rights over others—those who are aware you haven't begun Chapter Two of your novel.

The delicate line here is choosing a goal that is attainable, yet will impress *them*. "I will make my bed every morning" has the potentially double drawbacks of being neither attainable, nor—should you actually realize it—granting you any social cachet.

What achievement, performed as promised and adequately, would elicit cheers, and swath your brow in laurels?

I personally have not found such a one—yet—but by putting off a commitment long enough, you finally will breach 2011's Winter Solstice, and once again be too caught up in holiday consumption to take on any weighty commitments. Whew!

Now, with a hoist of frozen eggnog and Jack, pay it forward to 2012. **E.B. BOATNER**

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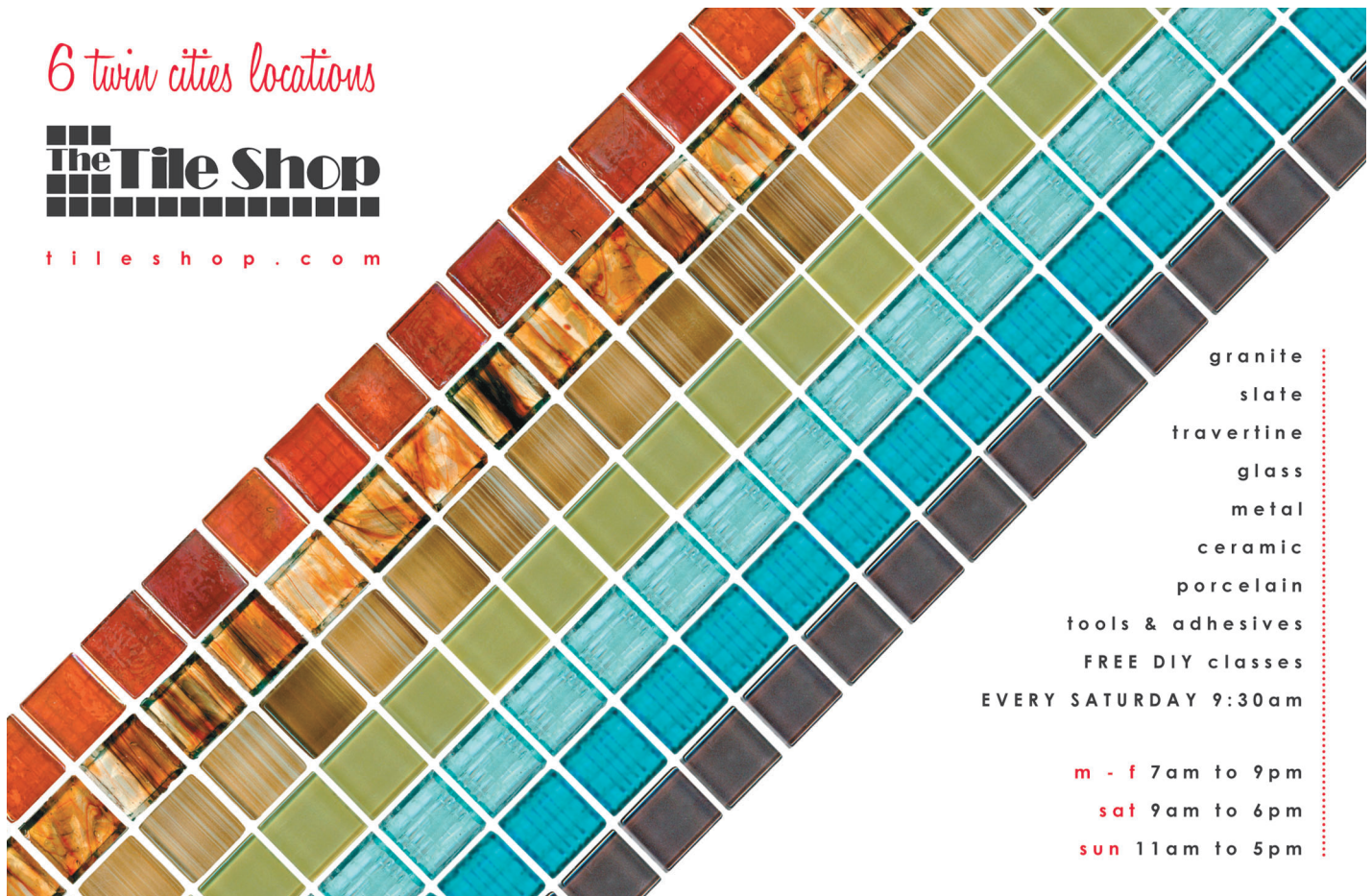
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Daniel Boyer's Sister Thanks *Lavender*

Thank you so much for all the December 16 *Lavender* magazines sent. The cover article and pictures on my brother, Daniel Boyer, were absolutely perfect! I have been sharing the magazines with his many family members and friends from Michigan. What a lovely Christmas present for all of us. At a time that has been difficult, it has brought such happy thoughts and memories! Give our gratitude to all of your staff.

MARY ANNE PUTT



Daniel Boyer Article Was Fantastic

I wanted to share with you that the article on Daniel Boyer in your December 16 issue was fantastic. I was choking back tears in the Uptown Diner reading it. He was a great man and a great friend, and I thought it was really special that he was honored that way.

DAVID A. OLSON
SENIOR FINANCIAL ADVISOR
AMERIPRISE FINANCIAL SERVICES

Bear Community and Youth

I was just thinking about growing up as a teenager, and

having the bear community as a constant reminder of a better future.

When I was in eighth grade, I was in my awkward stage. I gained a little bit of weight, my acne was at its worst, and I was in the closet.

Naturally, though many people seem to want to doubt it, I, like every other teenage boy, liked porn. But I never liked looking at disgusting-looking boys without a single hair on their chest. I gravitated towards bears, first for their looks, and then for their culture.

I found, and still find, bear culture beyond amazing. It's a culture where people who are often seen as ugly are seen as sexy, and that makes me feel comfortable. I've always wanted a place in the bear community.

Sadly, for as long as I've known I was gay, I've always been a teenager. As much as being a part of the bear community in the future was certain, I'm of Russian decent, so chest hair is a given.

I still needed that connection in my awkward middle-teenage years more than at any other time. Sadly, the young gays are given no outreach or member-

ship in the community, for obvious reasons. All I ever wished for, however, was a small piece of acceptance.

I feel that as teenagers are continuing to struggle with their sexualities and their places within the gay community, it should be the duty of the bear community to make its presence known, and to give teenagers hope for acceptance and love within the gay community, no matter what they may look like or act like. As much as I thank the bear community, I just wish that I could've been a part of it more.

As a gay teenager living just outside Minneapolis (the suburbs), and therefore, just outside of mainstream gay culture both in location and age, I greatly love *Lavender* for providing a way for me to stay connected to the community I was born into.

SKYLER DORR

Willkie Exhorts Reitan

In 2006, GLBT activist Jacob Reitan tried to enlist as an openly gay soldier. In the *Star Tribune* on December 19, he said, "Many of the 14,000 veterans who were kicked out will be eager to reenlist, and some of those who never joined because of it may will reconsider. You're going to see a real uptick in recruitment numbers as a result of the ban being lifted."

I am sure Reitan will be one of the first openly-gay soldiers to enlist. I recommend he join the Marines, and request going into the infantry in Afghanistan, where there was strong resistance to lifting the ban.

If Reitan gets killed, suffers from posttraumatic stress syndrome, and/or suffers permanent injury by having his limbs blown off, at least his family will know that it was for American freedom and GLBT equality.

PHIL WILLKIE

Don't Ask, Don't Tell Repeal Logical

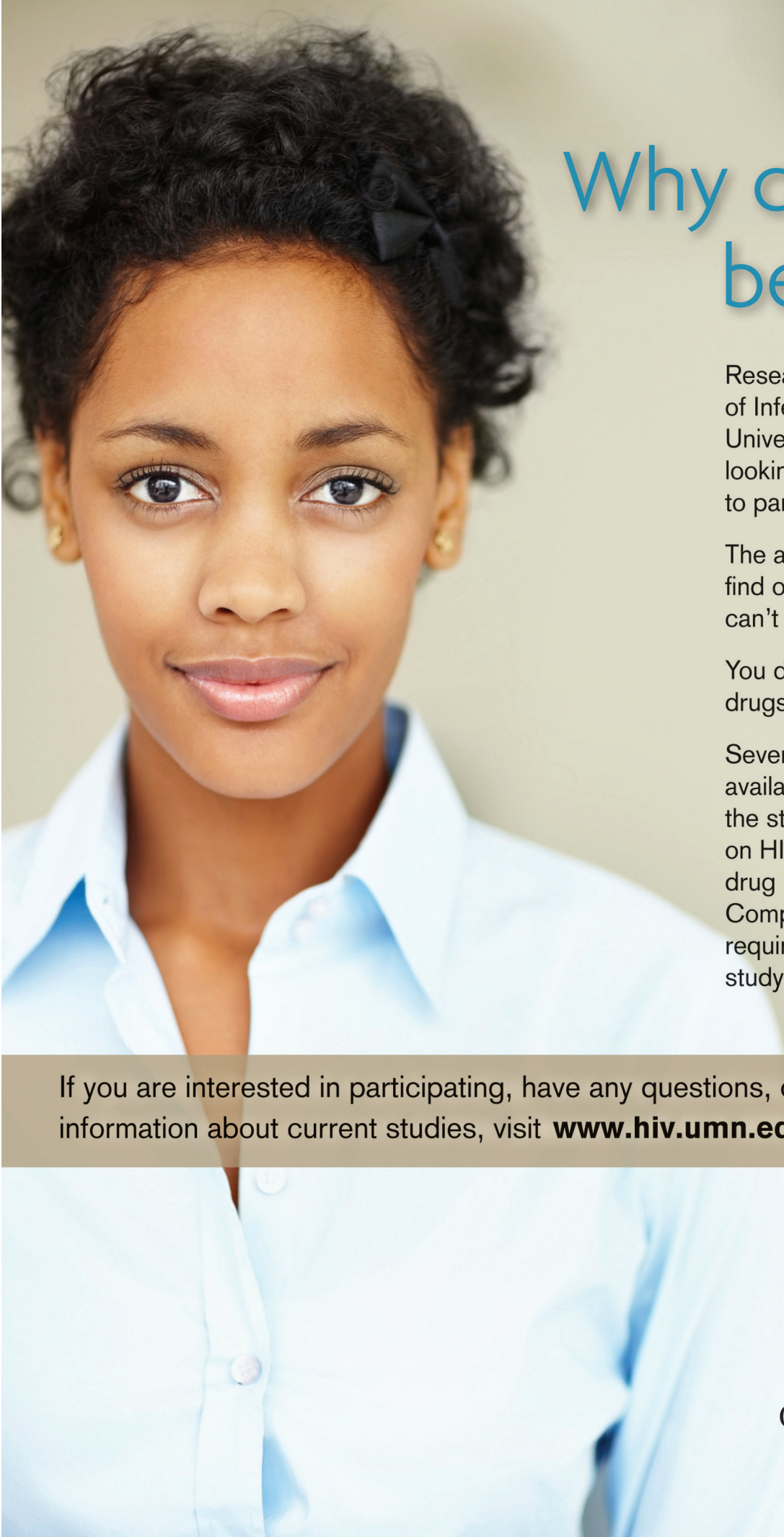
To paraphrase our First Lady on the day her hubby became President, "I am proud to be an American today!" Millions of us across the United States are thrilled to see the American "Berlin Wall" of prejudice and hatred fall with the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell.

I am in my 60s, and I have watched our Armed Forces grudgingly accept Japanese-Americans, men of color, and women. Our defenses did not collapse, as the prejudicial fear-mongers predicted. Anyone who is passionate about serving this country should be allowed to serve—in all places, in all ways.

As Spock (*Star Trek*) would say, "It's logical!"

NANCY LANTHIER CARROLL

Letters are subject to editing for grammar, punctuation, space, and libel. They should be no more than 300 words. Letters must include name, address, and phone number. Unsigned letters will not be published. Priority will be given to letters that refer to material previously published in *Lavender* Magazine. Submit letters to *Lavender* Magazine, Letters to the Editor, 3715 Chicago Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55407; or e-mail <editor@laven-dermagazine.com>.



Why can't HIV be cured?

Researchers from the Division of Infectious Diseases at the University of Minnesota are looking for HIV+ and HIV- people to participate in research studies.

The aim of these studies is to find out why HIV persists and can't be cured with HIV drugs.

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Several opportunities are available and depending upon the study, you may be started on HIV drugs or your current drug regimen may be adjusted. Compensation and time requirements vary based on the study for which you may qualify.

If you are interested in participating, have any questions, or would like more information about current studies, visit **www.hiv.umn.edu** or call **612-625-7472**



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The Dollhouse Hosts Preholiday Bash



ON DECEMBER 4, The Dollhouse hosted its Preholiday Bash at Hell's Kitchen in Minneapolis. It incorporates the look and feel of a 1940s speakeasy with a modern twist. Lil Miss Sweet Tooth and her band The Daisy Dukes performed.

Photo by Sophia Hantzes



Rainbow Health Initiative Receives Grant



RECENTLY, RAINBOW HEALTH Initiative (RHI) received a Tobacco-free Communities grant from the Minnesota Department of Health. The anticipated amount is \$200,000 for the first year. This award will fund a new leadership-development program for young adults working on tobacco-control issues in Minnesota.



Eubank and Raffo Are New PFund Executive Directors



KATE EUBANK AND Susan Raffo are the new Executive Directors of PFund Foundation. They are sharing the position. Eubank served as a Director of Development and Communications for The Bridge for Youth. Raffo has worked in a consulting capacity for PFund and other organizations.

Kate Eubank (right) and Susan Raffo. Photo © PFund Foundation



Grinley Is American Craft Council Director of Development



GREG GRINLEY IS the new Director of Development for the American Craft Council. He most recently served as Executive Director of PFund Foundation. He also worked for 10 years in development at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts.

Greg Grinley. Photo Courtesy of American Craft Council

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State of the Movement Address

Friday, February 4
1:30 PM – 2:45 PM



Rea Carey
Executive Director,
National Gay and Lesbian
Task Force

Indigenous Peoples of the Americas: Towards Collective Sovereignty

Saturday, February 5
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COVER FEATURE ◆



WINTER WHAT-TO-DO

St. Paul Winter Carnival Commemorates 125th Year

When life barrages them with lemons, some folks make lemonade. When Minnesotans are deluged with snow, they make...Winter Carnival!

Since 1886—125 years, now—that is exactly what St. Paulites have done, and are preparing to do again. The St. Paul Winter Carnival is the oldest such event in the United States, predating Pasadena's Tournament of Roses Festival by a good two years.

EARLY DAYS OF THE CARNIVAL

As the story goes, the St. Paul Winter Carnival initially was created as an indignant response to the chilly reaction to St. Paul by visiting Eastern newspaper correspondents in the fall of 1885. Without waiting to expe-

rience real winter, they returned East, and trumpeted that Minnesota in general was "another Siberia, unfit for human habitation."

A group of Minnesota chauvinists—local St. Paul business owners—felt compelled to retaliate. After conferring with their "Siberian" cohorts in Montreal, they decided on a wintertime festival showcasing the beauty and grandeur of snowbound Minnesota. Montreal already had scheduled an 1886 festival, but serendipitously for St. Paul suspended it because of a smallpox epidemic.

The St. Paul consortium immediately inveigled Alexander Hutchinson, designer of Montreal's 1883 and 1885 ice palaces, to create a blueprint for St. Paul's first ice castle. It duly was constructed on February 1, 1886, at a cost of \$5,210 (1886) dollars, soaring to a height of 106 feet. (The Carnival's 1992 Pepsi

Ice Palace cost \$1,900,000, and was 165 feet tall—a Guinness record).

KING BOREAS VERSUS THE VULCANS

Where Montreal had an Ice King accompanied by Queen Aurora, in St. Paul, the pair became King Boreas and Aurora, Queen of the Snows. The mischievous Vulcan and his red-caped Krewe were drawn from the Germanic traditions of the energy and disruption that springtime brings to the final days of winter.

2011's Boreas Rex, King of the Winds, and Aurora, Queen of the Snows, rule over approximately 21 Royal Family members, including his four brother winds, Titan (North), Euros (East), Zephyrus (West), and Notos (South), together with their four princesses, the Prime Minister, and up to ten Royal Guards. The culmination of the ➡

Photos Courtesy of St. Paul Winter Carnival



Carnival is the dethroning of Boreas by Vulcanus Rex and his Vulcan Krewe.

According to Carnival sources, the Minnesota Winter Carnival legend formally was set forth by newspaper columnist Fran Madden in 1937, and has been updated and revised ever since.

Short version: Boreas Rex happened on the “winter paradise known as Minnesota,” and proclaimed “Historic St. Paul and her seven hills” the “ideal place” to be “emblazoned to the world as the winter playground of the Realm of Boreas.” His implacable enemy, Vulcanus Rex, God of Fire—who with his Vulcan Krewe has his own lengthy story—annually sets his might against Boreas. On the 10th day of the celebrations, Vulcanus arrives, as he will again on February 5, to storm the ice castle, confronting the King’s Guard, until the good Queen persuades her consort to return peaceably to Olympus until winter’s snows once again enfold St. Paul’s seven hills.

THIS YEAR’S CARNIVAL

In honor of this 125th year of “The Coolest Celebration on Earth™”—as it has been dubbed—organizers have striven to produce 125 events under the 2011 Winter Carnival umbrella. In light of this profusion of events, it’s best to be proactive. Visit <www.winter-carnival.com> for a comprehensive view of everything from the Pre-Carnival action starting January 22 and continuing through February 6. Events range from ice sculpture competitions to a blood drive to a royal wedding.

Three spectacular parades, the **Moon-Glow Pedestrian Parade**, the **King Boreas**

Grand Day Parade, and the **Torchlight Parade** (January 28, January 29, and February 5, respectively) highlight the Carnival.

The magnificent ice sculptures preside throughout in Rice Park in Downtown St. Paul—stunning whether viewed by day or night.

A small sampling of the 125 events includes:

Klondike Kate Winter Carnival Cabaret (January 22). On January 6, Anita McColley of Minneapolis was chosen to be “St. Paul’s mistress of fun, frivolity, and good fel-



lowship.” At the Cabaret, the newly-minted Kate, with a five-piece band of former titleholders, will cut up in the spirit of the original spangled-and-flashy Kathleen “Klondike Kate” Rockwell of the 1890s.

Official First Day of the St. Paul Winter Carnival: Royal Coronation (January 27). Boreas Rex and Aurora, Queen of the Snows, are crowned at the St. Paul River Centre in a social and dinner followed by pageantry. Open to the public. Free admission with a Winter Carnival button.

Institute of Navigation (ION) Satellite Division Autonomous Snow Plow Competition (January 29). Six colleges and universities from Minnesota, Michigan, and Ohio compete near Rice Park in this inaugural event featuring their robotic, computer-controlled snowplows. The competition involves creating a Straight “I-Shaped” snowfield.

Royal Wedding (February 5). In Rice Park, the marriage of the 1983 King Boreas and the 1955 Aurora, Queen of the Snows, takes place. Charlie Hall and Dorothy Arneberg Furlong, members of the Royal Family at different times, both lost their spouses, then found each other through Carnival activities. Arriving by carriage, they really will get married! Former Queens of the Snows will be bridesmaids. The public is welcome.

Fire & Ice Hockey Girls Tournament

(February 6). All day at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds.

WINTER WONDERLAND

The St. Paul Winter Carnival is just that—a spectacular show—but like all carnivals, it also embraces a family. While the Royal Family and others originally were drawn from the Montreal template, the local family has taken on a life of its own. The Royal Family and Vulcan Krewe are made up of volunteers who make more than 400 appearances during the year to local and national festivals, nursing homes, schools, and hospitals on behalf of the Winter Carnival and the City of St. Paul. So, too, the Royal Order of Klondike Kates—



past and present—takes to the road for some 100 appearances annually.

The 11 days of gaiety bring in some 350,000 visitors in hoods and parkas.

The Carnival has a \$3.5 to \$5 million annual impact on St. Paul and Minnesota, according to Molly Mulvehill Steinke, Senior Media Relations Specialist.

Beth Pinkney, President and CEO of the Saint Paul Festival and Heritage Foundation, producer of the Carnival, who is immersed in her third year with the event, relishes “the strong tradition it has every year, and seeing people getting out to embrace our winter season.”

All Carnival events take place in St. Paul. They are free and open to the public, unless otherwise noted.

Clearly, with 125 events, the Carnival has something for everyone. Check online for accurate places, times, and fees or ticket requirements, if any. The schedule is subject to change—weather obviously determining some events.

Visit <www.winter-carnival.com> for the most up-to-date information before venturing out into the Minnesota cold. **E.B. BOATNER**



WINTER WHAT-TO-DO

LAKE MINNETONKA XC SKI RACE

January 15

Come on out for a family-friendly race on Lake Minnetonka in Excelsior Bay. Events include 5K Classic and Freestyle; 10K Classic and Freestyle; 15K Classic and Freestyle; and 2K Kids Race. Registration fees \$20 per person per race through January 13, and \$25 on the day of race. Kids race free. 5K starts at 10 AM. 15K starts at 10 AM. 10K starts at 10:15 AM. 2K Kids Race starts after the 10K has finished. For more information, or to register, visit <www.lakeminnetonkaxcskiclassic.com>.

ARCTIC FEVER 2011: CELEBRATING FIVE YEARS OF WINTER FUN

January 15-16

Hosted by Excelsior, Shorewood, and Tonka Bay, this family-friendly winter extravaganza offers such delights as sleigh rides, cross-country ski racing, dog sled rides, Ice Princess Costume Contest, Nordic hiking, sledding, snowshoeing, skijoring between city parks, bonfires, bike race on Lake Minnetonka, medallion hunt, and much more. It's a great way to get out of the house, and enjoy all of the things that Minnesota has to offer

communities in the wintertime. For more information, visit <www.arcticfever.net>.

US POND HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIPS

January 21-23

As Founding Commissioner Fred Haberman says, "We love pond hockey because it's hockey the way nature intended, outside in the elements during the absolute coldest time of the year, playing with others who love the game." The goal is to celebrate the joy of hockey on a Minneapolis lake each January, with players reuniting with their ➡

youth and friends over a weekend when time can stand still, and everyone can be kids for three days. This year, it takes place on Lake Nokomis, Minneapolis. For a full schedule of events, registration information, and times, visit <www.uspondhockey.com>.

CITY OF LAKES LOPPET

February 5-6

The City of Lakes Loppet is a cross-country ski festival featuring the beautiful trails and lakes of the Twin Cities. Join the fun for this celebration of winter in Minnesota. Events include snow-sculpture contests; skijoring; Beer, BBQ, and Vendor Village; and Minnesota Youth Ski League SuperCarnival—in addition to other great outdoor activities for all ages. For information on registering for events, volunteering, or just coming out to watch the fun, visit <www.cityoflakesloppet.com>.

MIDWEST SKIJORERS CLUB WINTER EVENTS

PUPPY LOVE RACE

February 12

SNOWFLAKE SKIJOR AND SPRING CLASSIC

March 5-6

The Midwest Skijorers Club has several events for dogs and their people. On February 12, the Puppy Love Race features skijor and four dog spring classes, kid and mutt race, and purebred awards in Skijor and Sled. Skijoring is a winter sport that combines cross-country skiing with dog power. The skier is attached to a dog with a belt and towline, and is pulled by the dog across the snow. Skijoring is a team sport that allows both human and canine counterparts to exercise, and enjoy the great outdoors. No same-day registration. On March 5-6, the Snowflake Skijor and Spring Classic features an option for a 10 to 12 K course for those interested in a longer race format (skijoring only). No same day registration. For all the details, plus information on registering for events, visit <www.skijor.org>.

NORTH COUNTRY BEARS FUR FLEE: FOUREVER

March 4-6

This year's North Country Bears (NCB) getaway to Duluth-Superior promises to be the biggest and best yet, so get your room reserved and your Flee Collar/Pass before prices go up. Fur Flee was such a great suc-



City of Lakes Loppet . Photo by Sophia Hantzes

cess at the Barkers Island Inn Resort last year that NCB reserved it again, and has got the entire hotel. A restaurant is onsite. Complimentary cocktails will be available in the hospitality suite as part of the run package, along with discounts at the Duluth Sauna, Beer Bust/Liquor specials, access to Pool Parties, and much more. Don't miss out: Get your Flee Collar now! Reminder: All the Wisconsin bars are smoke-free this year. Tickets bought before January 31 are \$50. Tickets purchased between February 1 and March are \$60. Barker's Island Inn Resort, Superior, Wisconsin: (715) 392-7152. For more information, visit <www.ncbears.com>.

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Big Brother Bruce and Little Brother Eli. Photo by Philip Hussong

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF THE GREATER TWIN CITIES

WELCOMES MENTORS FROM GLBT COMMUNITY

Ivividly can recall the day Johnny Hughes drove up in his black jeep with his Rolling Stones cap on his head. Our son, Corbin, was meeting his “Big” for the first time. A match coordinator from Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) of the Greater Twin

Cities was on hand to facilitate that initial meeting, and get the mentoring match off on the right foot. The connection was instant. Johnny and Corbin’s first activity was walking the dogs at the Animal Humane Society.

Four years later, the two sound like old friends when they talk on the phone, and

make plans to hang out together.

My oldest son, Quintin, was fortunate to be matched with an equally fitting mentor. He and Rob Reidy spend time barbecuing, going to sports games, watching movies, or getting a bite to eat.

As lesbian moms, my partner, Linda, and

AS A PREVIOUS VOLUNTEER AND NOW A NEW STAFF MEMBER FOR THE AGENCY, I'VE TALKED ABOUT IT WITH MANY INDIVIDUALS FROM THE GLBT COMMUNITY. I OFTEN HEAR THE PERCEPTION THAT IT IS NOT OPEN TO GLBT VOLUNTEERS. IN REALITY, THE AGENCY WELCOMES MENTORS FROM ALL COMMUNITIES.

I could not be more grateful for these two men who have devoted their time and interest to our sons. January is National Mentoring Month, and it's a time when I reflect on the immeasurable gift that Johnny and Rob have given to our sons.

BBBS of the Greater Twin Cities has been matching "Bigs" and "Littles" for more than 90 years. Last year, it served nearly 3,400 kids in 10 counties in the Twin Cities metro area.

As a previous volunteer and now a new staff member for the agency, I've talked about it with many individuals from the GLBT community. I often hear the perception that it is not open to GLBT volunteers. In reality, the agency welcomes mentors from all communities.

Jane Bowman, Bruce Rehberg, Chas Salmen, and Russ Testa are four mentors who have served as openly gay and lesbian Bigs. I hope their stories inspire you to serve one of the hundreds of young people who currently are waiting for a mentor.

Russ and Chas, who said that they sought to do something bigger than just the two of them, shared, "We wanted to do something together that would stretch us beyond our friendships and dinner parties."

Both men enjoyed spending time with kids, and discovered the option of enrolling in the Big Couples program at BBBS. This program matches couples or colleagues with a "Little." They were matched for two years with their Little.

Reflecting back, Russ states, "No matter how busy you are, everyone has some discretionary time. Why not spend it doing something like this that impacts someone's life directly?"

BBBS encourages and often hosts low-cost or free activities for matches, but ultimately, Bigs and Littles decide on how they spend their time together, based on com-

mon interests. Memories of doing simple activities—like cooking together, working in the garden, or playing Uno—were the most meaningful for all of them.

Jane, a St. Paul attorney who is a lesbian, and Ashley, a St. Paul teen, spent their first few meetings getting to know each other, and exploring the Twin Cities. I spoke with them at the State Capitol after they had just met with Senator Scott Dibble.

Bowman recounts, "Over the past two years, we met with a judge, sat in on my friend's Minnesota Public Radio show, and have done a lot of cooking together."

Ashley is a quiet 14-year-old, and Jane's goal is to share a wide variety of experiences with her. Jane, who had a middle-class upbringing, often is struck by the challenges in Ashley's life.

Of the kids served by BBBS, 90 percent come from single-parent families, and 76 percent are in low-income families. An increasing number of children are in the Mentoring Children of Prisoners (MCP) program.

Bruce, a Coon Rapids resident, has been a Big for more than two years. He has participated in volunteer orientations, sharing his experiences and photos from all the adventures that he and his Little Brother, Eli, have had.

Believing that being a gay male has been positive for his relationship with Eli, Bruce explains, "I've been accepted for who I am. I tend to bring the softer side of things to the relationship, and show that there are lots of things out there in the world to experience."

Bruce and Eli's list of activities, which is long and varied, includes shopping for a soldier through "Soldier's Angels," driving around to look at holiday lights, riding bikes down by the Mississippi River, attending a Twin Cities Gay Men's Chorus holiday concert, and going to the Living Green Expo.

In addition, the two have attended many

agency-sponsored events, such as karaoke night, a day at Grand Slam, and the annual Metrodome (now Mall of America Field) Holiday Party. They even performed a musical comedy routine at last year's BBBS Talent Showcase at the Mall of America.

When asked about a particular memorable outing, Bruce thought for a while, then pointed out the time he picked Eli up, and his mother warned him of her son's mood.

Bruce recalls, "Once we were a few blocks from his house, his mood changed. Apparently, he wasn't interested in doing his math homework. We happened to be going to The Works in Edina. One of the exhibits was on binary. Eli picked up on it really fast, and even said it was easy. I said, 'See, you are good at math. The binary stuff is really hard.' Afterwards, he went home, and finished his math homework."

All four mentors spoke of their initial worries of the time commitment, and of being "out" to BBBS. Looking back, they all agree that every hour being a mentor has been time well spent, and that being gay or lesbian was never an issue.

As Bruce puts it, "It is a good way to be an ambassador of our community into someone's life that might not otherwise have the chance to know or meet someone who is gay. Believe it or not, if you accept them for who they are, they will accept you for who you are."

Better yet, you may change a young person's life forever. **LAURA SMIDZIK**

Laura Smidzik is past Executive Director of Rainbow Families and Project 515. She now is recruiting "Bigs" at Big Brothers Big Sisters, and seeking a Master's in Divinity at United Seminary.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Greater Twin Cities
(651) 789-2400
www.bigstwincities.org

You Didn't Ask, But I'm Telling

As I stood brushing my teeth this morning, listening to National Public Radio like a good little liberal homosexual, I was reminded that Republicans (cue the “Imperial March” from *Star Wars*) have taken control of the US House, and gained more control in the Senate. I almost gagged on my toothbrush. I started foaming at the mouth. Actually, it was just toothpaste, but you get the point.

Well, I thought, at least we’ve had a Democratic President for the past two years, and a Democratic-controlled Congress for the past four. That’s a whole two years with the gayest President and the gayest Congress in the history of the United States—two years finally to begin fulfilling their campaign promises to enact equality legislation, and finally to grant GLBT Americans their long-overdue civil rights.

So, what exactly did the unambiguously-gay-friendly duo accomplish over the past two years? I started compiling a mental list of their major accomplishments.

Repealing the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA)—yes, the one signed into law by Democratic President Bill Clinton? Nope. Well, while Congress may not have taken it up, at least Democratic President Barack Obama supported its repeal, right? Actually, a federal court ruled that DOMA is unconstitutional. But the Obama Administration appealed the decision. Yeah, but it said that has to do with some sort of complicated constitutional-separation-of-powers mumbo jumbo. OK, fine. Next.

How about at last enacting the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA)? Nope. Even after Congress (including gayer-than-gay Congressman Barney Frank) threw transgender people over the side of the boat to make the legislation more “appealing” to the “mainstream,” it still couldn’t get a law passed—in the 21st Century!—to

prevent people from being fired from their job for just being themselves.

I started to sweat. Congress is a complicated beast, and politicians always paint the rosier of pictures during the campaign, but surely these guys followed through on at least one of their major promises to the GLBT community.

What about repealing Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell (DADT)? Well, yes...sort of. *Yes! Finally!* Wait, what do I mean “sort of”? Congress did pass and the President did sign legislation, but it was a compromise that didn’t repeal DADT outright, but rather allowed the President and the Pentagon to proceed on their own timetable. And once the ban officially is repealed, so gay and lesbian soldiers can serve openly, they won’t be able to do so equally.

God, I’m a buzzkill. What do I mean?

Because of the federal DOMA, legally-married same-sex spouses of service members will not receive the same benefits as heterosexual spouses. Gay troops with families will not get the same housing, food, and travel allowances or medical care that heterosexual spouses and families do.

So, basically, a ban signed into law by a Democratic President almost 20 years ago barely was quasirepealed in the last few minutes of a lame-duck legislative session after the loudest supporters of our community had complete control of Congress for the past four years and the Presidency for the past two.

How, you ask, were they able to pull off this last-minute “Hail, Mary Pass”? That happened when and only when eight *Republicans* crossed party lines to support the bill, ensuring a filibuster-proof majority.

To top it off, this entire crazy legislative kabuki dance need never have happened in the first place.

Wait...what? You heard me.

On September 9, 2010, a federal judge

ruled that DADT was unconstitutional. Coincidentally, none other than the Log Cabin Republicans brought the case to court. Three days later, she ordered a worldwide injunction, ending the ban. Military recruiters were told to accept gay applicants. For eight days, the Pentagon didn’t enforce DADT. The world didn’t explode in a big gay mushroom cloud. Gay sex didn’t break out in combat units—at least no more than usual.

What happened? Obama’s Justice Department appealed the decision. Not only that, it asked for and got a stay, meaning the ban immediately was put back in place. Didn’t the department have to appeal? No. Absolutely not.

The President tried to argue that a legislative resolution was somehow more meaningful, more lasting.

In my opinion, Obama wanted it that way so he and Congressional Democrats could go back to the GLBT community to laud this accomplishment, garnering votes and financial support for 2012.

Playing politics with civil rights—not quite the change we were told to believe in.

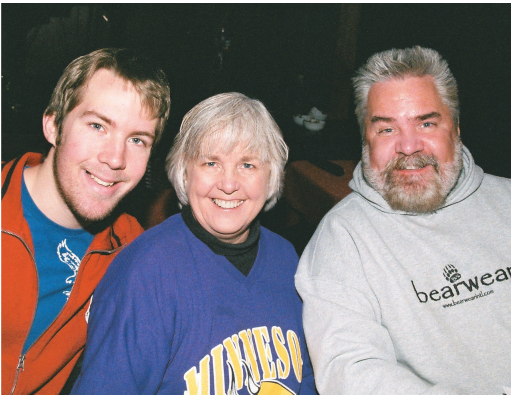
I looked in the mirror again. This time, I was foaming at the mouth—and it wasn’t the toothpaste.

If we’ve learned anything from the past two years, it’s that we finally must stop handing over our time, effort, and financial resources so freely to politicians and parties saying one thing, yet doing another or nothing at all. We also must cease enabling organizations in our own community that continue to spend millions of our dollars, yet fail to achieve any substantive reform.

The civil rights movement of the last century was not successful because it had cute bumper stickers and snazzy black-tie dinners with celebrity keynote speakers—or gift shops. **BRADLEY TRYNOR**

LAVENDER'S OUT IN THE STANDS
Pregame Brunch
December 5
Tickles

Photos by Sophia Hantzes



LAVENDER'S OUT IN THE STANDS
Vikings Game
December 5
Mall of America Field

Photos by Randy Stern



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BIG GAY NEWS

**BIG
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NATIONAL

OBAMA SIGNS BILL BEGINNING THE END OF DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL

President Barack Obama signed legislation in December that begins the process of repealing Don't Ask, Don't Tell, the military's ban on openly gay service members. The legislation alone does not repeal the policy, but allows the President and the Pentagon to determine how and when it happens. Obama has said the process will take months, not years. The legislation does not grant gay and lesbian service members equal treatment in the military. For example, once they can serve, their partners will not be entitled to the same benefits heterosexual service members receive.

GAY MAN LEADS NORTH CAROLINA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

The Charlotte Observer reports that openly gay Stan Kimer has been elected President of the North Carolina Council of Churches (NCCC), a coalition of 17 Christian denominations. Only one other openly gay leader has been elected to any of the country's 33 similar church councils. NCCC Executive Director Reverend George Reed told the newspaper, "A lot of our member denominations have internal battles about this, but the governing board felt the fact that he is a gay man was not a disqualifying factor."

VIRGINIA LAWMAKER INTRODUCES BILL TO BAN GAY TROOPS FROM NATIONAL GUARD

In response to the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell, Virginia state legislator Bob Marshall has announced he is drafting legislation that would ban "active homosexuals" from the state's National Guard units. He said in a statement, "This policy will weaken military recruitment and retention, and will increase pressure for a military draft." He alleged that Congress was "conducting a social experiment with our troops and our national security." Even if the legislation were brought up for a vote, it is unlikely it would pass, or be signed by the governor.

AUSTIN GAY MEN ATTACKED AFTER HUGGING

Two gay men in Austin, Texas, say they were attacked in December after leaving a gay nightclub. According to Bobby Beltran and Christopher Ortega, the two were hugging each other goodbye when a car full of men stopped nearby, and yelled antigay slurs at them. Beltran recounted, "I just turned, and I said, 'That stuff's not welcome here in Austin. We don't accept that.' And that really set them off." He added that the men then got out of the car, and jumped Ortega and him. No one has been arrested in the case.

WORLD

UN VOTES TO RESTORE SEXUAL ORIENTATION TO HUMAN RIGHTS RESOLUTION

Reuters reports that the United Nations has voted to restore a sexual orientation reference to a resolution condemning unjust killings for a variety of reasons, including race, national origin, religion, and ethnicity. It was removed in November after a proposal by African and Arab nations. The resulting outcry from Western nations led to an amendment from the United States to restore it. Cary Alan Johnson, Executive Director of the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission, told reporters, "The outpouring of support from the international community sent the strong message to our representatives at the UN that it is unacceptable to make invisible the deadly violence LGBT people face because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation."

LUXURY HOTEL FOR GAY MEN TO OPEN IN MEXICO

The Adonis Tulum hotel, a luxury property catering exclusively to gay male tourists, is scheduled to open in January in Mexico's Tulum archeological zone in the state of Quintana Roo. Patrick Lurenz, the hotel's General Director, remarked, "The hotel is uniquely for men. Only homosexual couples are accepted. It's not for women, although among our personnel, we have heterosexual men and women, and all have received specialized training to avoid having our guests feel uncomfortable or discriminated against." **WRITTEN & COMPILED BY BRADLEY TRAYNOR**

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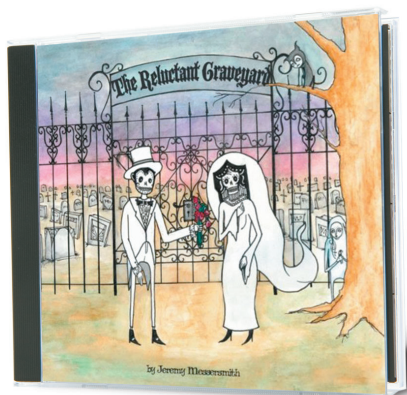
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2010 YEAR IN REVIEW

While overprocessed, Auto-Tuned-to-death pop was the soup of the day during most of 2010—occasionally interrupted by a fresh-faced teenybopper or some Glee-inspired monstrosity—the year actually produced a bumper crop of great music. A great diversity of styles made headway during the year, with the best of it often fueled by a bracing honesty. Others just produced great pop music—which can be just as rewarding.

ALBUM OF THE YEAR



The Reluctant Graveyard

JEREMY MESSERSMITH

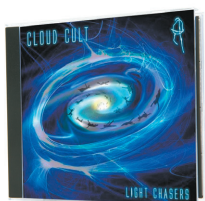
Messersmith packs more into this 33-minute masterpiece than most artists could manage at three times the length. Though packed with imagery right out of Edward Gorey, Messersmith's latest is never maudlin. It helps that a sly sense of humor runs through the entire set; that the songs sport a love of classic 1960s pop without aping the era; and that the arrangements offer a dazzling array of music and vocals.

OTHER TOP 10 ALBUMS



The Suburbs **ARCADE FIRE**

These indie darlings turned into Grammy-nominated rockers with an album that is light years better than any of the other nominations. See, something can come out of living in cookie-cutter communities.



Light Chasers **CLOUD CULT**

These local superstars put out another intense, cutting-to-the-bone set. Mixing joy, pain, and sorrow, it ended up being a powerful, affirming look at life.



A Badly Broken Code **DESSA**

The local hip-hop artist takes the listener on a harrowing journey that only affirms her skills and the depth of the Twin Cities scene.

Relayed
GAYNGS

Tour-bus incidents aside, this local super-group had a great year—topped by this compelling set of late-night tunes. Never has the spirit of 10cc been channeled in such a compelling way.

The ArchAndroid
JANELLE MONAE

You can have your plastic pop stars. Give me someone with plenty of heart, musical skills, and vocal chops.

My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy

Kanye West

Maybe he's a jerk—then again, it's not like he beat up his girlfriend, or packed his tour bus with loaded guns—but West always can bring the musical fire, as he does on this dense, driving, and thrilling record.

High Violet
THE NATIONAL

These Ohio expats skipped out on all the hyphens, and made the best pure rock record of the year. Like a lot of the best albums of the year, real sadness is here, but it doesn't take the easy way out, or descend into pure maudlin emo-core.

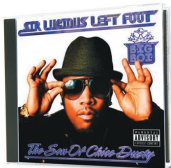
2
RETRIBUTION GOSPEL CHOIR

I'm a sucker for tuneful, noisy guitars. Andy Sparhawk and company have them in spades on this set.

Body Talk
ROBYN

Electro-pop was everywhere in 2010, but it was rarely better than on this trilogy of mini-LPs that let the Swede explore the outer reaches of her sexuality and mind.

22 MORE GREAT ALBUMS



Lucious Left Foot: The Son of Chico Dusty
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American Slang
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All Day
GIRL TALK

Plastic Beach
GORILLAZ

The Lady Killer
CEE LO GREEN

Heaven is Whenever
THE HOLD STEADY

Wake Up!
JOHN LEGEND AND THE ROOTS

The Outsiders are Back
KINGS GO FORTH

Spiral Shadow
KYLESA

Maya
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Eyelid Movies
PHANTOGRAM

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PETER WOLF CRIER

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ROBERT PLANT

The Sea
CORINNE BAILEY RAE

The Bookseller's House
Crater Lake
ROGUE VALLEY

I Learned the Hard Way
SHARON KING AND THE DAP KINGS

The Smoke of My Will
STNNNG

Majesty Shredding
SUPERCHUNK

Odd Blood
YEASAYER

SINGLE OF THE YEAR



"Fk You"**
CEE LO GREEN

BEST 2009 ALBUM I DIDN'T
HEAR UNTIL 2010

(Even though a copy of it was sitting on my desk for months. I really need to clean it off more often. OK, that's my new year's resolution.)



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ARTISTS WHO ARE
PROBABLY GREAT GUYS
AND WRITE NOT-BAD
SONGS, BUT I COULD USE A
BREAK FROM

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WORST ALBUM OF
THE YEAR



Rebirth
LIL' WAYNE
OK, you made a rock album, Lil' Wayne. Let us never speak of it again.



Glengarry Glenn Ross. Photo by Thomas Sandelands

Glengarry Glenn Ross • [Through Jan. 29](#) • Theatre Garage • 711 W. Franklin Ave., Mpls. • (952) 929-9097 • www.torchtheater.com

Director David Mann calls playwright David Mamet's 1982 masterwork "a violent, funny, and painful look at men trying to be men. The subject of manhood comes up repeatedly, often in vitriolic exchanges about a character's lack of it. In this play, Mamet's primary purpose is to examine the savage underpinnings of capitalism, greed, and a system that rewards privilege with further opportunity. Along the way, it illuminates the agonizing limitation of conventional male gender roles. These men are forced to define their identities by their ranking on a sales contest board. Only he who achieves the highest sales figure is a man. Because the sales figures continually change, their identities are never secure. Frustration breeds violence, as they wrestle with the truth that, according to these rules, manhood and success can never fully be realized."

Macbeth...Rehearsing

[Through Jan. 22](#)

Red Eye Theater
14 W. 15th St., Mpls.
(651) 646-1764
www.redeyetheater.org

Carl Jung died 50 years ago, but his groundbreaking work with dreams, gender, and folklore still magically reverberates. Director Maggie Scanlan draws from his psychological theories to illuminate one of Shakespeare's grisliest tragedies.

In her current deconstruction, Scanlan says, "I continue to explore the concepts of the masculine and the feminine in Shakespeare. There are multiple allusions to 'manliness' throughout *Macbeth*, and the concept is connected to everything from being willing to kill for desire to bravery on the battlefield to wisdom and charity. For Shakespeare, the true meaning of manliness is connected to being a human. The play champions balance, and shows the danger of stereotyping and pigeonholing masculinity, thus shoving it into a ghetto filled with murder, treachery, and 'strange images of death.'"

Two women, Kristin Foster and Andie Olthoff, play the male roles of Banquo and Malcolm.

Out There 2011: New European Performance

[Through Jan. 29](#)

Walker Art Center
1750 Hennepin Ave., Mpls.
(612) 375-7600
www.walkerart.org

Berlin is the name of the group, but it's based in Antwerp, Belgium. Its acclaimed and quirky *Bonanza: A Documentary for Five Screens* actually was shot in Colorado's smallest town, Bonanza: population 7. It's not only a movie on five screens, but also includes a large-scale model of the houses where the citizens gossip, sue, fight, and murder! Screens January 20-22.

Hailing from Paris's Vivarium Studio, theater-maker Philippe Quesne's *L'Effet de Serge* involves so-called "microperformances" in



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an apartment. It won a special Obie award this past May. Critics have singled it out as a truly mysterious and ineffable piece of work. Screens January 27-29.

Come Back to the Five and Dime, Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean

Through Jan. 30

Theatre in the Round

245 Cedar Ave., Mpls.

(612) 333-3010

www.theatreintheround.org



Come Back to the Five and Dime, Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean. Copyright Act One, Too, Ltd.

Director David Coral explains that the characters in Ed Graczyk's stunning 1976 comedy "have all lived their lives behind a strong facade of some sort, and continue to hide behind that wall of fantasy. Only Joe [Dan Eckman-Thomas], now Joanne [Tina Moroni], realized this many years prior to the play, and had the courage to act to resolve that issue, despite the attitudes of at best, novelty, and at worst, disgust, in the 1970s. Joe/Joanne's return to her old stomping grounds is her final step in putting the past away to free herself from those chains."

The Comedy of Errors

Through Jan. 30

Guthrie Theater

818 S. 2nd St., Mpls.

(612) 377-2224

www.guthrietheater.org

On the surface, this play arguably appears to be William Shakespeare's frothiest comedy, but it involves a sly commentary on harsh trade policies and the deceptive power of image.

Director Ian Belknap shares, "The confrontations that spring out of mistaken identity are absolutely life and death to the characters when they are happening. And out of that spurs the comedy. These are real situations to these people, and the audience does indeed know there are two sets of twins. They know the secret. It's a simple, wonderful use of dramatic irony."

Actor Jamie Smithson crosses the gender line as Nell, the obese kitchen wench described in the text as "spherical, like a globe." ■



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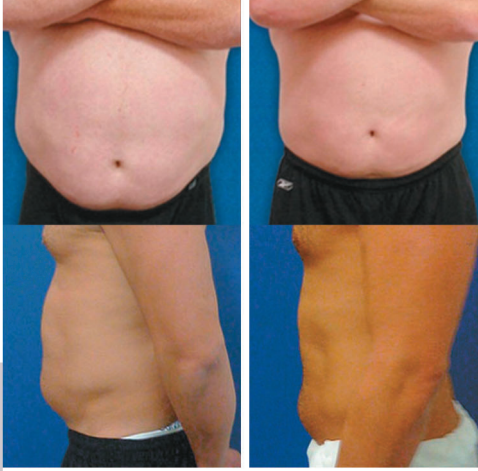
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Best of the Decade

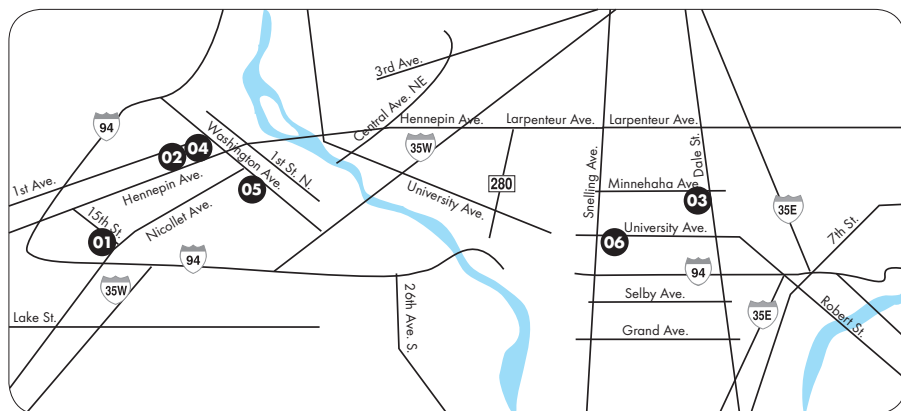



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Photo by George Holdgrafer

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TOWN HOUSE
January 2

Photos by George Holdgrafer



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The 3rd Thursday Each Month

When: Thursday, January 20, 2011
Time: 5:30 - 8:00 PM
Cost: FREE
Dress Code: None - Come as you are
Where: Coale's
719 N. Dale St., St. Paul

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December 11

Gay 90's

Photo Courtesy of The Black Guard



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Country Night • Sat., Jan. 22
Elegance • Sat., Jan. 29

Olde Tymers Party

Saturday, January 22 • 4 PM-??

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THIRSTDAYS**
December 16
Gay 90's

Photos by Sophia Hantzes



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BAR CALENDAR

For club addresses, phone numbers, and websites, see "Bar Advertiser Guide" on page 32. For events not at bars, see <LavenderMaga zine.com/calendar>.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 14

Gary Collins
5 PM. Tickle's.
Jeff Olson
8:30 PM. Tickle's.
YOLO
9 PM. Town House.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 15

Imperial Start to the New Year
Imperial Court of Minnesota
Benefit for The Trevor Project
5:30 PM. Dance Annex. Gay 90's.
Whitney Rhodes
8:30 PM. Tickle's.
TNT Show
9 PM. Town House.
The Aton's Bar Night
9:30 PM. 19 Bar.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 16

Singles Pool Tournament
4 PM. 19 Bar.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 20

Lavender's ThirstDays
5:30 PM. Coale's.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 21

Gary Collins
5 PM. Tickle's.
Jeff Olson
8:30 PM. Tickle's.
Dragged Out
9:30 PM. Town House.
Foam Party
Dance Annex. Gay 90's.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 22

Olde Tyme's Party
4 PM. Town House.
Jimmy Martin
8:30 PM. Tickle's.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 28

Gary Collins
5 PM. Tickle's.
Mia Dorr
9 PM. Tickle's.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 29

Mia Dorr
9 PM. Tickle's.
Elegance
9 PM. Town House.

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TUESDAYS - Glee Night

WEDNESDAYS - BOGO Date Night

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FRIDAYS/SATURDAYS -

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See Website for More
Information Regarding Events,
Entertainment, Schedules and
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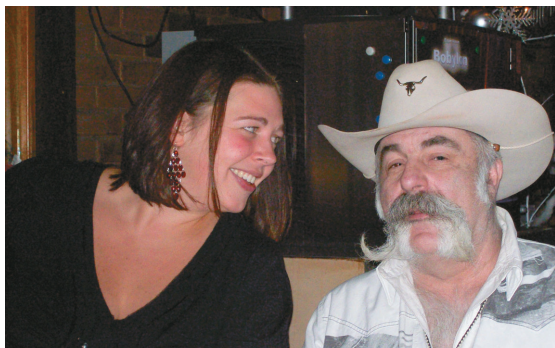
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BLUE MOON BALL
November 19
The Main Club

Photos Courtesy of Keith Haugen



BOBYLON
November 20
The Main Club

Photos by George Holdgrafer



Joseph Yankovich 1937-2010

Joseph A. Yankovich, 73, passed away peacefully at his home in Minneapolis in his favorite recliner chair on December 20. He was born July 7, 1937, in Glendale, West Virginia.

Yankovich was prominent in the local gay bar scene for a half-century. He started out at the 19 Bar in Minneapolis in the late 1950s. When the Town House bar in St. Paul went gay in 1969, he was its first manager for several years.

But Yankovich was best-known as the longtime manager of the Gay 90's in Downtown Minneapolis, where he worked from the 1970s until he retired when the Blooms sold it in 2008.

Recently, Yankovich again worked for the Blooms at their new establishment, Mort's Deli in Golden Valley.

In the local film *Faux* released this year, Yankovich appeared briefly in the Weisman Art Museum segment, for which he was listed in the credits.

Yankovich is survived by his partner and best friend of 36 years, Bob Stafford, and Stafford's family, including the Mars family; the Blooms; and kitties, Tiki and Stormy.

Memorials are preferred to the Diabetes Association.

Yankovich's notice will remain on legacy.com until December 2011. Messages may be left there. **GEORGE HOLDGRAFER**



LAVENDER's

JANUARY BAR SALUTE



6th Annual Imperial
Start to the New Year

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BEST NEW RESTAURANTS 2010

BY CARLA WALDEMAR



HAUTE DISH

Steak and Eggs: steak tartare, Bloody Mary oyster shooter, romaine hearts, toasted brioche, egg in a hole.

Photo by Hubert Bonnet



We finally got the memo. Minnesotans weren't meant to feast on sweet corn and strawberries in winter. The best restaurants to debut in 2010, by coincidence or perhaps the power of their mantra, were those that marched to the lo-covorian cadence: Hup, hup. Eat regional and seasonal. ➔



IN SEASON

Leading off is a winner recently launched by Chef Don Saunders. In fact, he calls it In Season. To get the point across, he lists winter's ingredients on one side of the menu—butternut squash, rabbit, pomegranates, chestnuts, etc.—while the flip side details their magical unions in dishes such as oysters and pork belly with sweet-and-sour cabbage; pappardelle noodles with rabbit ragout; beef cheeks with root veggies and red wine; and so on. Having learned his lesson at the former now-shuttered La Fugaise, this time, the menu won't challenge your pocketbook.

In Season

5416 Penn Ave. S., Mpls.
(612) 926-0105
www.inseasonrestaurant.com

BLACKBIRD

Several of the year's best new places represent fortunate rebirths after a hiatus because of fire or fortune. Blackbird has roosted newly in digs twice as big as formerly. The decor has skewed a little more urbane, but not to worry—the romantic chandeliers, the glam mirrors, and the quirky antler collection remain. So do several don't-you-dare-touch-them menu items: the iconic walleye po' boy and banh mi sandwiches; the duck roll; and the empanadas. But pay attention to new ventures, too, such as the butternut squash/ricotta brûlée, or the grilled squid with fennel sausage and smoked tomato beurre blanc. Speaking of regional/seasonal, nothing says it like chicken with fried livers, frisée, apples, and walnuts in mustard vinaigrette.

Blackbird

3800 Nicollet Ave., Mpls.
(612) 823-4790
www.blackbirdmpls.com

HEIDI'S

Blackbird's former neighbor, Heidi's—also up in flames last winter—is reopening in January at a new location at Lake and Lyndale in Minneapolis. Expect some of Chef/Patron Stewart Woodman's all-time faves, accented by new dishes he has worked on in the interim. Larger room, more seating, and a tree—a big one!—smack in the center of the room.

Heidi's

2903 Lyndale Ave. S., Mpls.
(612) 354-3512
www.heidismpls.com

HEARTLAND

Heartland left the heart of Mac/Groveland to head to St. Paul's Lowertown, and ➔

(Above) In Season; (Below) Blackbird. Photos by Mike Hnida

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Mozza Mia. Photo by Mike Hnida

a bigger, spiffier site in which to consume Chef Lenny Russo's all-consuming passion for crafting from the here-and-now. Choose from daily-changing prix-fixe carnivore or veggie menus touting provender so local, it probably never saw the insides of a semi.

Heartland

289 E. 5th St., St. Paul
(651) 699-3536
www.heartlandrestaurant.com

RICE PAPER

Rice Paper made the move from a room tiny as a closet to a larger, bright and cheery site at 50th and France in Edina. Owner An Nguyen leads the culinary vanguard by presenting food that's fresh, colorful, and healthy, but stripped of grease and MSG. Try the Tamarind Rice Trio, reminiscent of treats she savored in

her Vietnamese village; the sweet and tender coconut shrimp; the Ruby and Jade Curry, named for its colorful ribbons of cabbage; and the South Sea Mussels, bobbing in their garlic-laced broth. Nice wine list, too.

Rice Paper

3948 W. 50th St., Edina
(952) 288-2888
<http://ricepaperrestaurant.com/>

HAUTE DISH

In the Minneapolis Warehouse District, Haute Dish borrows classic dishes from your Minnesota granny's cookbook, and deconstructs them to wow more modern palates—sort of like taking a Grant Wood painting, and letting Picasso have at it. Case in point: the Steak and Eggs. Instead of medium-rare and over-easy, the beef comes tartare-style, and the egg appears in a hole—à la an English pub—except the bread with the hole is uberrich brioche, and it comes with a bonus shooter of tomato water with a raw oyster in the bottom. Here's how the nouveau Tater Tot Hot Dish goes: succulent, insanely tender short ribs ringed by a mighty mound of haricots verts (anorexic string beans) and



"tots" composed of white sauce with a lode of molten cheese in the center. The café occupies the former Café Havana space, still all dark and clubby.

Haute Dish

119 Washington Ave. N., Mpls.
(612) 338-8484
www.haute-dish.com

NORTHEAST SOCIAL CLUB

In what fast is becoming a rockin' stretch of dining real estate, 13th Avenue NE in Minneapolis—home of the lovely Modern, quirky 331 Club, boho Erté, and Eire-centric Anchor—is joined by the Northeast Social Club. Although new, the storefront café is as old-timey as its title indicates, thanks to a lengthy bar to belly up to, an antique tin ceiling, and beneath it a bellicose mural of epic proportions. Eddie, the chef, doesn't fall into lockstep behind the town's trendsters. Instead, consider his offbeat salad of grilled asparagus sided by fresh-pulled mozz; the housemade lamb sausage served up with watercress pesto; or the St. Louis-style ribs sided with a swell smoked-tomato barbecue sauce. In line with the neighborhood's ethos, nothing's over \$20, either. Except the attitude

of our server—as the credit card companies say, priceless.

Northeast Social Club

350 13th Ave. NE, Mpls.
(612) 877-8111
www.northeastsocial.com

MOZZA MIA

Although the guerillas of the corner cafés seem to be winning our loyalty and dining dollars, several corporations have captured our hearts, too. Parasole's latest love child, Mozza Mia, took over the former Tejas space at 50th and France in Edina. It's slick; it's chic; and it's a dead-simple, two-beat menu: mozzarella in several mutations and wood-fired pizzas. Both are housemade daily. Both are divine

Mozza Mia

3910 W. 50th St., Edina
(952) 288-2882
<http://mozzamia.com/>

PINSTripES

Coming our way from Chicago, Pinstripes took me by pleasant surprise. Also in Edina, the complex offers the modern 3 B's—no, not

classical music, but everything else needed for a night out: bowling, bocce, and bistro dining. Soaring window walls overlook snow-capped pines, while indoors, a stone fireplace blazes. Backstage, the kitchen's smokin', too. Can't miss on the soups du jour, including a homemade tomato that'll put Campbell's out of business. Gotta love the trio of tenderloin sliders, too, with foie gras-scented mayo, and topped with a blizzard of shoestring fries. The wondrous Eggplant, Parmesan, and Portobello panino converted the veggiephobe at our table. We went nuts over the Italian jambalaya risotto (fusion cooking at its best), as well as the flaky halibut dressed for success in pine nuts and a side of spinach-artichoke risotto. Let me warn you about the cheesecake with its brûléed topping, and the apple-pear bread pudding: Don't let anybody tell you that crime doesn't pay.

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SCANDINAVIAN

➤ SIGHTSEEING

I landed in Copenhagen, and took off from Stockholm a week later. The welcome couldn't have been warmer.

Gate announcement flying SAS: "You can put away your passports, but smiles are mandatory."

Ugly Americans, rethink your destination. Everybody else, welcome to Scandinavia. I landed in Copenhagen, and took off from Stockholm a week later. Off-season, the nights were long and the weather cool, yet the welcome couldn't have been warmer. Only one precaution: Leave that Viking logo sweatshirt at home. Here in the realm of the original Vikings, style rules. It's a clean, understated, "Wish I looked like that" brand of chic.

COPENHAGEN

Patrol Copenhagen's Stroget—the longest pedestrian shopping street in Europe—punctuated by vast public squares anchored by Somebody on a Horse, and you'll see what I mean. One end is high-end—Royal Copenhagen, Georg Jensen, Gucci—the other, OK, McDonald's, filled with cherubic blond moppets. In between, Illums, the Nordstrom's of the city, delivers fashion that makes you want to burn everything in your wardrobe, plus a Design Department featuring home accessories you cannot (trust me) live without. Outside H&M (of Scandinavian origin), an accordion and oboe duo. More buskers down the block, from dueling marimbas to sweet violins. At an out-



(Above) Amalienborg Palace. Photo by Klaus Bentzen (Below) Tour of the Canals. Photo by Christian Alsing



(From left) Copenhagen Café Life. Photo by Christian Alsing • Danish Design Center. Photo by Carla Waldemar

DESIGN IS IN THE DANISH DNA. STEP INTO THE NATIONAL MUSEUM, AND GAZE AT VIKING JEWELRY AND SKELETON OF 986 AD, HAIRDO INTACT.

door stall, a cook flips pancakes.

Design is in the Danish DNA. Step into the National Museum, and gaze at Viking jewelry and skeleton of 986 AD, hairdo intact. Forge forward to the Reformation to view Martin Luther in papier mache. The Danish Museum of Art & Design travels from early times through sleek melamine kitchenware and Bang & Olufsen's radios to designs of the future (well, maybe), such as a gent in a pink-and-white Piggy Suit with matching valise. The Danish Design Center—LEGOs to BIOM sneakers, paper clips to lawn clip-pers—captures everyday style.

The Glyptotek salutes Danish painting from 1800 onward. In contrast, at the Jewish Museum, architect-of-the-moment Daniel Libeskind (World Trade Center Memorial coming up) employs confining, slanted slabs to convey the disorientation that displacement fostered. The Resistance Museum examines national stress under Nazi rule: capitulate, collaborate, or sabotage? Most famously, and heroically, when Hitler decreed Jewish deportation in 1943, almost over-

night, scores of fishing boats smuggled their fellow citizens to Sweden.

Design of quite another sort—flamboyant psychedelic murals of the hippie 1960s—blanket the communal, countercultural enclave called Christiania. The gayborhood just west of that island hosts hot-hot gay bars, dance clubs, B&Bs, and saunas (free condoms everywhere). Check out <www.meetgaycopenhagen.dk>.

Nyhavn, the historic canal district, is lined with sherbet-hued houses (one was home to Hans Christian Andersen), newly-vivacious as outdoor cafés. Here, join a boat tour—free, along with museums and other transportation, with purchase of the Copenhagen Card—to glide past the new Opera House and the Little Mermaid, with glimpses of Amalienborg Castle, home of the royals since 1794, where stoic, beaver-hatted soldiers click heels on the cobblestones.

Dining ignites more design fervor in this stylish city, starting with its 13-Michelin-starred restaurants (more than Milan). I chose more affordable up-and-comers like

Skt. Annee, housed amid the historic bricks near Nyhavn. Its forte is herring (seven styles), but I'd wolfed my own weight in that fragrant fish at breakfast at the uberhistoric Admiral Hotel. So, a salad lush with lobster, then fillet of plaice, a tender white fish, with snappy homemade remoulade. Or choose homemade pork sausage or smoked eel with scrambled eggs, amid other rehabs of Danish classics. It has won a Michelin mention.

So has Koeffoed, another cosy setting that calls on, and then reinvents, country fare: rooster with potato foam and chanterelles; veal carpaccio with buckthorn, malt, and beets; and my choice, cod topped with "Danish foie gras" (liver from that self-same rooster) atop spinach, pumpkin puree, and herbed potatoes.

Nimb offers two-fer views: on one side, the sparkling lights of Tivoli amusement park; and on the other, an open kitchen featuring elite inventions such as veal tartare with mushroom foam, chestnuts, and cress, topped with a dainty quail egg, then Western Sea skate with apples and leeks, or roe ➔



Stockholm street scenes. Photos Courtesy of Stock.xchng.com

deer with smoked marrow, chanterelles, and lingonberries. Don't miss the caramel ice cream with grilled pears.

At Salt, in the Admiral Hotel, try to decide between mallard duck with preserved rose hips, wild mushrooms, and dill, or pork shank aside caramelized lemon and cauliflower. Even the Glyptotec Museum gets into the act. Its café, set under a botanical dome, features some of the finest pastries in town—so heavenly, in fact, that the chef has her own TV show.

STOCKHOLM

You thrive on design? Well, Sweden can satisfy, too. Stockholm makes a strong statement, starting with the new Photography Museum's *Fashion Through the Ages* show, featuring bold-name photogs like Richard Avedon, Helmut Newton, and Annie Liebowitz shooting supermodels in offrunway moments: Elle McPherson to Naomi Campbell, and Kate Moon all nude and skinny.

Just as outrageous is the Nordic Museum's show *Dandy*, showcasing top designers' essentials for men, along with explanatory statements such as "It's simple—just dress impeccably" to "The Dandy is a bit of a queer," with a lavender suit, pink shirt, and tie as role models. Other rooms trace Swedish styles from the 1870s through the not-entirely-admirable invention of polyester.

The National Museum gets into the act with its *Century of Design* show—laptops to shopping carts and spatulas. Remember, IKEA was born here. And the arresting Museum of Modern Art uses its white, soaring walls to trace avant-garde canvases from old-timers Picasso and Dali to Warhol, Oldenberg, and Yves Klein. Use your Stockholm Card for free admission and transportation via metro, whose gawkworthy stations are called "the longest art gallery in the world."

Luxe shops clustered near the National Theater (once home to Ingmar Bergman) are minigalleries of fine taste: Svenskt Tenn for playful fabrics fashioned into everything from pillows to purses; Palmquist, supplying leather goods to the Royals and us mere mortals, too; MarZio for boots or ballerina shoes in 20 colors; Orrefors for collectors' crystal; Acne for collectors' jeans (and impossible



Stockholm street scene. Photo Courtesy of Stock.xchg.com • Pastries await from a Baker. Photo by Carla Waldemar



YOU THRIVE ON DESIGN? WELL, **SWEDEN CAN SATISFY, TOO.** STOCKHOLM MAKES A STRONG STATEMENT.

shoes); oddmollys for clothes it rightly dubs “Bohemian Scandinavian chic”; Fifth Avenue Shoe Repair for svelte everything-but-shoes; and DesignTorget for fun ways to spice your home, and life.

Wander the Medieval island of Gamla Stan with the 600-room Royal Castle (about as cozy as the Pentagon). Cross another of the town’s 53 bridges to yet-another island, Södermalm. SoFo, the city’s boho hub and showcase of design for the alternative set, offers: Beyond Vintage for period rags; Cocktail Deluxe for classy kitsch (penguin salt and pepper shakers, red polka-dot tango shoes); Grandpa for retro menswear; and 10 Swedish Designers for just that, the collective’s swell clothes. Cafés include Mellqvist, featured in Stieg Larsson’s books and tours for cultists, and Spring, hangout for the “latte mamas” caffeinating their year-long parental leave (papas, too).

Shopping for food is another exercise in fashion at Ostermalms Saluhall, the Harrod’s Food Court of Sweden. Rub elbows with the locals over smorrebrod (those luscious,

open-faced sandwiches) of beef with horseradish sauce, shrimp married with asparagus, and more.

Locovores reach heaven at Gubbhyllan, an 1880s house-turned-restaurant in Skanska, a Sweden-in-microcosm collection of buildings and costumed craftsmen. Here, Chef K. C. Wallberg, AKA “the King of Slow Food,” crafts Swedish all-stars, such as boar sausage or reindeer stew, further brightened with a cabbage-dill-lentil salad. To gild his creamy cheesecake, he has saved the heritage, sweet-sour seabuckthorn berry from extinction.

Celebrate classics at Prinzen, itself a classic setting, where my bossy waiter insisted I order the Swedish dumplings—meatballs coated in mashed potatoes, boiled, halved, and fried in butter, then topped with a garland of tart lingonberries to scrub the palate. PS: He was right.

And what’s more iconic than Swedish meatballs? I wolfed more than my share, sweetened once again with lingonberries, at my hotel, the lovely (and GLBT-friendly) Skeppsholmen, boasting spare, modern styl-

ing in the historic military barracks that anchor the island’s park-like setting. First, dig into this: a cocktail of shrimp, grapefruit, horseradish and avocado.

For GLBT info, pick up QX Magazine.

Across the bridge, B.A.R. serves as a shrine for fish fanatics. Choose your fillet from the iced array at the counter, then select sides (coleslaw to risotto) and sauces (aioli for me, chili for my partner).

One last meal? Head back to romantic Gamla Stan, where Den Glydene Freden launched its kitchen in 1722. Nothing dated about the menu, however, forcing hard choices like crab salad with apples, basil, and vanilla, or duck-liver pâté paired with preserved figs. Then, lamb with cabbage, beets, pureed potatoes, and roasted garlic sauce? Or maybe cod with mussels? They’ll have to forklift me onto the plane. **CARLA WALDEMAR**

For your own flight of fantasy contact <VisitDenmark.com> and <VisitSweden.com>.

The Bridge That Ends Halfway

Writer's Note: This column depicts graphic violence.

Life as I know it began with a suicide.

It was a night in June 1992. I was 6 years old.

I'm in my bedroom playing video games when I hear the screaming begin. It's my mother, defending herself again from her boyfriend. He's manically abusive to her. His bouts of rage are unannounced and frequent. The man terrifies me. I often dream of him killing her.

I begin crying. I drop my video game, and run from the shadowy safety of my bedroom to hers.

He pauses to see me enter—something that usually defuses the situation. Despite his cruelty to my mother, he never has hurt her in my presence.

This night is different, however. He is apathetic about my arrival.

He turns back to Mom, and continues his tirade with such ferocity that his voice alone can't convey his rage. So, he hits her. He throws her to the floor.

She is screaming. She, too, sees that this isn't his being his regular sadistic self. On this night, he's another man. Murderous.

From under the mattress, he retrieves the newest member of the family: a pistol. He insisted upon its purchase to make the house safer.

He holds the gun to my mother's head, and looks at me as if to savor my reaction when he ends her life. I'm screaming and crying. I'm begging him to stop. And all I can think of is my grandmother finding Mom and me on the bedroom floor.

My mother keeps repeating that she loves him. She encourages me to do the same. So, I do. Anything to make this stop. And this is the woman she was: In the heat of the most explosive, most tragic moment of her life, she thinks of one thing only: love.

His face grows hesitant. The rage subsides. He lets her go.

She rushes to me, picks me up, and for some reason, we're headed to the bathroom. My body's wrapped around hers. My face is in the crook of her neck. This position gives me a devastating angle of him on the edge of the bed, looking at me.

His eyes are empty. Nothing is left in this man. I somehow know, even at 6, that his life is about to end. But I don't look away. I can't. Something about his glare makes me want to keep telling him I love him—like he's waiting for me to say something. I want to make everything better.

He looks toward his reflection in the window, raises the gun to his head—and suddenly, the house shakes under the vibration of the loudest noise I've ever heard. He falls off the bed in a contorted, horrific manner. And he's gone.

My mother will be wholly affected by this event. It will eat at her until May 1998—her death.

This isn't a column about why people take their own lives. I have no place to make such a conclusion. This is about suicide as it affects those it leaves behind.

I'm telling you about this event—of which even some of my closest friends aren't aware—because it's what I have to contrib-

ute to this conversation, to this epidemic.

The above event preceded a dark childhood. First, hallucinations of him standing in my bedroom, covered in blood, watching me. I would find him in my classroom, on the playground, in the cafeteria, half his face gone, watching. He always was watching in my waking dreams.

I felt my guidance counselors look at me as a damaged, diseased child. They feared my demons would seep out, and contaminate the other, normal children.

My mother did the best she could for me in those treacherous years that followed, but the suicide changed her. She wasn't Mommy anymore. I was lonely, petrified.

To this day, I smell the stench that filled my mother's bedroom in the moments after his death. I still hear the screaming. I still feel the rush of terror and the sense of helplessness.

The consequences of his suicide for me, though everlasting, fuel my passion to break away from it—to become something better for it. But the result could have been different. I ended up on one side of a very fine line that my mother couldn't overcome.

I now think back to my head being on my mother's shoulder, looking at the final moments of his life—his waiting for me to say something. I wonder what that would be now.

And I think I'd like to tell him to look ahead and squint—to peer through the haze, and see that on the other side of the bridge stand people who love him, people who want to help him, people who will tell him it gets better. **JUSTIN JONES**

Your Doctor's Credentials: What You Should Know

The "M.D." Is Only the Beginning of Your Doctor's Education

After completing a four-year college education, your doctor went to medical school for another four years. They were then awarded the M.D. degree, but were not yet licensed to practice medicine. But before they could even *begin* to practice independently, they had to complete a minimum of one *more* year of general medical training (internship), as well as a rigorous series of state licensing exams.

And if your doctor is a specialist (e.g., Dermatology, Gynecology, Internal Medicine), even more training and education is necessary. This typically requires a minimum of two to three additional years in residency studying that particular field. For a Dermatologist, this is usually three to four additional years. At that point, doctors have a choice whether or not to pursue Board certification in their own specialty.

What Is Board Certification, and Why Does It Matter?

Medical specialty board certification in the United States is a voluntary process. The "Board" is the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS), which is made up of several "Member Boards," such as the American Board of Dermatology.

Board certification demonstrates a physician's exceptional expertise in a particular specialty of medical practice, and is the gold standard for quality patient care. Other physicians, insurers, and quality-control organizations look for Board Certification as the best measure of a physician's knowledge, experience, and skills to provide quality healthcare within a given specialty.

Patients should look for this, too. But where do you begin?

How To Find Out If Your Doctor Is a



Dr. Jaime L.W. Davis. Photo Courtesy of Uptown Dermatology

Board Certified Specialist

There are a number of ways you can find out if your doctor is Board certified by an ABMS Member Board, such as the American Board of Dermatology. You can:

1. Ask them personally. If they are certified, they will be happy to share this accomplishment with you. Their certificate may be displayed in their office. Don't hesitate to ask to see it.
2. Check online free of charge at <www.ABMS.org>.
3. Call 1-866-ASK-ABMS (275-2267)
4. Look in *The Official ABMS Directory of Board Certified Medical Specialists* (found in many medical and public libraries).
5. Contact a Member Board, such as the American Board of Dermatology at <www.ABD.org>.

But remember that Board certification

is specialty-specific, and you should be sure your doctor is practicing the specialty *in which they are certified*. Your doctor may be certified in Family Medicine, but actually practicing another specialty, such as Dermatology. So, be *specific* when you ask about Board certification. In this example, yes, they are Board certified, but *not* in the area they are practicing. This misrepresentation of credentials is, unfortunately, all too common.

Maintenance of Certification Also Matters

Ultimately, the measure of physician specialists is not merely that they have been certified, but how well they keep current in their specialty. To maintain Board certification, your physician participates in an extensive process that involves completing accredited education and specialty training, and periodic oral and written exams to demonstrate excellence.

For Dermatologists recertification is required every 10 years, but continuing education courses are required several times a year. So, not only should you ask about whether your doctor is Board certified (in the specialty they practice, of course!), but also whether they have completed their *maintenance of certification*. **DR. JAIME L.W. DAVIS**

Jaime L.W. Davis, M.D., F.A.A.D., is a Board Certified Dermatologist with Uptown Dermatology and Assistant Professor of Dermatology at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Davis earned her credentials from the Mayo Clinic and the American Board of Dermatology, and is completely up to date with her Maintenance of Certification exams. You can place your care in her hands with the utmost confidence that her education and experience are virtually unparalleled in the Twin Cities. For more information, call Uptown Dermatology at (612) 455-3200, or visit <www.uptowndermatology.com>.

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Photos by Sophia Hantzes





Happy New Year from The Aliveness Project!

Thanks to everyone who helped with our annual holiday basket program for individuals and families affected by HIV/AIDS. This year, we distributed 710 gift baskets, serving over 950 adults and 450 children throughout Minnesota!

A special thank you to all the elves in our community who adopted families, wrapped presents, baked cookies, sewed quilts and stockings, donated gifts, delivered baskets and gave so generously of their time and money.

2011 Upcoming Events:

- March is Minnesota FoodShare Month — Support our Food Shelf!
- Dining Out for Life — Thursday, April 28
- Support our Capital Campaign for our new building at 3808 Nicollet Avenue

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CALENDAR

JANUARY

15

Saturday, January

THE BIG GAY COMEDY SHOW 2. We're here! We're funny! Get used to it! Stars comedians Jason Schommer, Jodie Maruska, Tom Steffen, Maggie Faris, and Mrs. Smith. Doors open at 6:30 PM. Performance at 7 PM. The Parkway Theater, 4814 Chicago Ave. S., Mpls. [612] 822-3030.

18

Tuesday, January

GLBT HOST HOME PROGRAM INFORMATIONAL MEETING. On any given night in Minnesota, approximately 200 GLBT youth are homeless. One of the ways the Twin Cities community is addressing the problem is through the GLBT Host Home Program of Avenues for the Homeless, which offers a transformative and community-based approach to providing GLBT youth with safe homes. As volunteers of the program, adults open their homes and their hearts to young people who need and are looking for a healthy and nurturing connection. Learn about the history of the GLBT Host Home Program, and about the application and screening process for potential volunteers. You will have an opportunity to hear from hosts who shared their homes with youth. 6-8 PM. Common Roots Café (Meeting Room), 2558 Lyndale Ave. S., Mpls. For more info, call Rocki at [612] 522-1690, ext. 110, or e-mail her at <hoshome@avenuesforyouth.org>.

21

Friday, January

THE ODYSSEY. In Park Square Theatre's world-premiere commission of *The Odyssey*, Minneapolis Playwright William Randall Beard reimagines Homer's epic not just as Odysseus' adventure, but as a family saga. Legendary warrior Odysseus (J.C. Cutler) battles beasts, tides, and his own arrogance—often with no weapon except his passion. His wife, Penelope (Jodi Kellogg), fights the urge to give up on the world. His son, Telemachus (Sasha Andreev), wrestles with his transition to adulthood. Reunited, they discover they can claim new lives, despite the sometimes-wicked blows of the gods. Through Feb. 6. Park Square Theatre, 20 W. 7th Pl., St. Paul. [651] 651-2291-7005 <www.parksquaretheatre.org>.

22

Saturday, January

BISEXUAL ORGANIZING PROJECT ANNUAL MEETING. Whether you are interested in getting involved as a board member, committee chair, or volunteer, the Bisexual Organizing Project (BOP) annual meeting is the perfect place to find out more about this growing organization. At the meeting, BOP will have elections for Vice Chair and Treasurer, which are two-year terms. At-large board member positions are to be filled, each of which carries a one-year term. Submit nominations for yourself or others to <tcbop1@yahoo.com>. Nominations also can be made at the meeting, where voting will take place. Refreshments will be served. 12:30-3:30 PM. Minneapolis North Regional Library, 1315 Lowry Ave. N., Mpls. <www.bisexualorganizingproject.org>.

RED RIBBON RIDE LAUNCH PARTY, EXPO, AND POTLUCK

It's the official kickoff of the 2011 Red Ribbon Ride. New to the Launch Party this year is a potluck. Bring a dish to share. See the Ride's new sleeveless bike jersey, and be the first to preorder one for only \$60. Learn about the Ride; meet the beneficiaries; talk with past Riders and Crew; and see the 2010 video coverage courtesy of Lifelimage, LLC. Take part in a breakout session where topics include fundraising. Register to a Rider, a Crew, or a General Volunteer. Noon-2 PM. St. Joan of Arc Church Gym, 4537 3rd Ave. S., Mpls. [612] 822-2110.

23

Sunday, January

MIMOSA MOVIES: BREAKFAST AT TIFANY'S. The Loring Theater and Loring Kitchen & Bar team up to bring you Mimosa Movies, a weekly series of Sunday matinees in the classic 1920's cinema The Loring Theater. Enjoy mimosas, coffee, beer, or wine from the theater bar, while enjoying 20th-Century classic movies as they were meant to be seen—on the big screen. You're encouraged to dress for the movie theme. Enjoy a bite to eat before or after the movie at Loring Kitchen & Bar. To get a free mimosa or Bloody Mary with your lunch or breakfast entrée order, just mention "Mimosa Movies." 2-5 PM. The Loring Theater, 1407 Nicollet Ave., Mpls.

ONGOING

BRETT FAVRE'S CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR II: THE SECOND COMING. Break from the family fumbles of the holiday season, and cheer as the all-star holiday lineup takes the field for Brett Favre's *Christmas Spectacular II: The Second Coming*. Brave New Workshop spike the holiday season with seasonal favorites, plus all-new sketches and songs, to leave audiences laughing through the New Year. Through Jan. 29. Brave New Workshop, 2605 Hennepin Ave. S., Mpls. [612] 332-6620. <www.bravenewworkshop.com>.



Come Back to the Five and Dime, Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean. Copyright Act One, Too, Ltd.

COME BACK TO THE FIVE AND DIME, JIMMY DEAN, JIMMY DEAN

In the Woolworth's store in McCarthy, Texas, the Disciples of James Dean are gathering for their 20th reunion. They were teenagers when movie star Dean filmed *Giant* in a nearby town, and their memories intermingle with flashbacks to that eventful time. This year, though, their reunion attracts a mystery guest. It's a comedy of Southern sass and spice, and emotional surprises, directed by David Coral. Audience discussion with director Coral and members of the company follow the matinee performance on Jan. 16. Through Jan. 30. Theater in the Round. Players, 245 Cedar Ave., Mpls. [612] 333-3010. <www.theatreintheround.org>.

TRETTER COLLECTION 10TH ANNIVERSARY EXHIBIT. Celebrating the 10th anniversary of the internationally-acclaimed Tretter Collection in GLBT Studies at the University of Minnesota, an exhibit, *Saving Our Lives*, runs through February 5. University of Minnesota, Elmer L. Andersen Library. <http://z.umn.edu/tretter-events>.

TRICK HORIZONS: NEW WORK BY DAVID WHANNEL. Influenced by the ordinary, surreal aspects of everyday objects, maximalist artist Whannel will use just about anything in his paintings and drawings to add interest and layers. Push and pull, inside out, jets streaming off the edge, little safe areas, bold colors, texture, funny stuff, vibrating edges, distorted perspective—with collage create a truly unique experience in each picture. Whannel doesn't consider himself an abstract artist, rather he's a fan of art. He believes there are no mistakes, just opportunity to improve and to further an image. This causes most pictures to be layered heavily with paper, objects, and paint. In fact, he considers white glue and scissors as his most valuable tools. What ends up being "behind" becomes just as important to the finished product as the foreground. When complete, a picture should be a total experience for all the senses. Through Jan. 30. Rosalux Gallery, 1224 2nd St. NE, Mpls. [612] 703-5785. <www.rosaluxgallery.com>.

For additional calendar events, visit <www.

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Story of My Life

Before I begin this column, let me state that I am not a movie snob. I am amused fairly easily. In fact, I'm probably the only person on Earth who actually enjoyed *The Beverly Hillbillies* movie, and genuinely was baffled when Roger Ebert gave it zero stars.

I know that you all think of me as an intellectual and an aesthete.

What other type of person could churn out such sophisticated and thoughtful prose in column form every couple of weeks?

Yet, even a person of my refined taste and great wit likes to wallow with the hoi polloi on occasion, which is why I found myself buying a ticket to a movie called *How Do You Know* last weekend.

I went to the movies in order to avoid arriving at my parents' home two hours early. If you have parents, you'll understand this.

Several movies on the marquee looked like they might be challenging and rewarding. But I picked *How Do You Know* because it stars Reese Witherspoon, who has played a supporting role in some of my minor sex fantasies.

I'm not going to get into the intricacies of the plot, because it had none. It was one of the worst romantic comedies I ever have seen. As I'm involved romantically with a woman who loves romantic comedies, I've been forced to watch every awful rom com movie ever made. Sadly, I've seen so many of these idiotic films that I feel comfortable using the term "rom com" in polite conversation.

I would have walked out of the theater in disgust, but that would have meant arriving early at my parents' home. So, I tuned out the movie, and pretended that I was watching a romantic comedy about my life instead.

Suddenly, there I was on the big screen! My hair looks perfect, which is always an in-



dication that I've suspended disbelief.

I'm skipping down a city street accompanied by a small monkey, which always is in my fantasies. He usually is wearing a little usher's jacket and a cap.

I'm in my mid-20s, dressed in a smart

outfit, and carrying a stunning bag that doubles as a portfolio. I'm a successful career gal on the go!

And then, though a series of comic misadventures, I meet a girl. She's beautiful and cunning. She makes me believe that she loves me. Because I am young, and filled with hope, I believe her! But she's a cad, and breaks my heart. I mope around for several years, making a lot of bad choices, and hurting innocent people in the process.

Through a montage that shows me growing older, eating TV dinners alone with the monkey, and getting drinks tossed on me by angry girlfriends, we see me slowly evolving.

The montage ends when the monkey dies. I look up from his grave, and realize with a smile—the monkey lived a good life, so no reason to mourn—that it's time to grow up, and find true love. Because this is a rom com, I do!

There she is, looking like a nonanorexic Renee Zellweger. She's a great cook and a pain in my ass. She loves rom coms, and she loves me.

Both movies end—the one on screen and the one in my head. I glance at the person who has been clutching my hand for the past two hours.

It's the fat Renee Zellweger! I didn't make her up. Remarkably, she's not weeping, as she usually does at the end of a rom com. She tells me that she hated the movie as much as I did. True love, at last! We hear the swell of music, and see a rush of end credits.

Author's Note: The fat Renee Zellweger insists that I tell you she weighs only 130 pounds, which is the real Renee Zellweger's definition of obese. **JENNIFER PARELLO**

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The Five Only Truly Important Events of 2010

I recently came across a list of the most important events of 2010. After reading all 50 items, it occurred to me that:

1. Another entire year has gone by, and, with the possible exception of taking a sledgehammer to the bathroom scale, I have accomplished absolutely nothing.

2. None of these events should even be on a list, because not one meets what I think we would all agree is *the* most important requirement of all: Did they even directly involve me?

Therefore we can omit everything from the Lindsay Lohan court cases to the gaping holes in the Metrodome. That leaves us with The Five Only Truly Important Events of 2010:

MARCH 25

This is the date on which my best friend, Jeff, and I had our annual “Could You Yell Louder? There’s Still Unshattered Glass in Winnipeg” fight.

The trouble started when he defiantly asked, “How could you not know that apples are gayer than oranges?” I understandably interpreted this query to mean “You alone are responsible for every problem known to man—from global warming to the continued, albeit diminished, threat to the legalization of gay marriage.”

Sensing that this was going to be a rational-thought-free discussion, Jeff thought it appropriate to dredge up and relive every argument we’ve had since 1989, followed by the traditional I-must-now-demonstrate-how-well-I-can-slam-a-door exit.

I countered with the thinly veiled threat “You think your life is miserable N-O-W!”

Then, I proceeded to partake of the traditional postfight pan of double-fudge brownies.

JUNE 11-16

After a travel agent asked, “Do you mind sleeping standing up while surrounded by livestock?” I realized I just couldn’t afford both a fancy vacation and get my required shots, deworming, and branding.

So, I decided to spend my vacation with loved ones. (Loved ones being defined as “people who will let me stay at their house for free.”) I was a little hesitant, insomuch as several issues stemming from my last visit with relatives have yet to be resolved in court. But I was determined to get along and, astonishingly, we did.

My Uncle Gunnar actually spoke to me for many consecutive minutes without repeatedly using the word “freak.”

And, to my surprise, not once did my Aunt Ebba whip out the “Tribute to Ingrid” photo album of my cousin’s fantastic life that “isn’t a disgrace to the family.”

AUGUST 4

My dog-sitter/walker of five years announced he would no longer be available, explaining, “I thought that your Yorkshire Terrorist would, at some point, exhibit at least some ‘man’s-best-friend’ characteristics. I no longer think this.”

Outraged and angered, I let him know just how I felt. I believe my exact words were, “Please, please, please don’t leave me alone with him.”

OCTOBER 14

This was, without question, a historic day. I went into my local liquor store to stock up on some much-needed “medicinal tonics,” and, for the first time in well over two decades, was asked for my ID.

The young man behind the counter, who apparently had just completed his “Cash Register-Gun-Any Questions” training, was curious why I was jumping up and down like a rabid hyena. So, I explained how flattering it was for someone to think I was younger than 21.

“What do you mean 21?” he replied. “I was checking to see if you’re 65. We have discounts for senior citizens.”

By the time the police arrived, I had calmed down, and removed my hands from around his neck.

NOVEMBER 17

Dear old friends tend to forget stuff. Granted, it’s tough to remember *everything*, like to return to your seat after intermission when you’re attending a play I’m starring in. Or the name of the audience member you left with to go to Room 36 at the Erotic Pleasures Motel.

Knowing that this particular friend doesn’t have the best memory, I have tried to make things easy. For example, over the 20 years we have known each other, I have purposely not once changed the date of my birthday.

Sometimes he remembers. This year, he forgot.

I haven’t.

Thusly, and consider the source here, I have every reason to believe that 2011 will be a very memorable year.

Happy New Year, and may you fill it with memories.

Bye for now.

Kiss, kiss. **JULIE DAFYDD**

Olfactorily Challenged

Dear Ms. Behavior:

I love my girlfriend, but I don't love the way she smells. Her breath, sweat, and body smell are OK (not great), but I seriously dislike the smell of her...um...lady parts.

I told my two closest friends about this when we first got together, but they encouraged me to go for it, because everything else about her is nearly perfect.

We have a fun sex life—and she's always perfectly happy to go down on me—but I am running out of excuses about not going down on her. I only have done it two or three times. I hated it. I can't do it again.

I don't know how I would tell her that I don't like her smell, especially because she can't fix it. She bathes regularly, and doesn't eat anything strange. It's just her personal odor. I never have had this problem with anyone else.

Should I tell her the truth, so that she stops asking me to do it? Or should I just keep coming up with excuses forever and ever?

—OLFACTORILY CHALLENGED

Dear Olfactorily Challenged:

Most excuses that possibly could be used for an exemption from muff diving would seem both hypochondriacal and temporary:

- (1) Whiplash
- (2) Sprained tongue
- (3) Headache

So, what else can you do?

It would be awkward and hurtful to say that you like the taste of a vagina in general, but not hers specifically. You might be better off with a little white lie: Explain that you don't like giving oral sex, and you don't think it ever is going to change.

This gives her several options:

- (1) She can decide not to go down on you, too, if it feels bad to her that oral sex isn't reciprocal.
- (2) She can work on accepting that she's in a relationship with someone who never is going to go down on her.
- (3) She can leave the relationship with the hope of finding someone who loves to give lip service.

Dear Ms. Behavior:

My family always has been critical of me. They never have been happy that I'm a lesbian, and they never have been fans of my girlfriends.

My relationship with my current partner, Lee, is serious, but we've been together for less than a year. I haven't introduced her to my family.

When we first met, Lee was an extremely butch woman. However, shortly after we got involved, he decided to follow his lifelong desire to become a man. Once he started taking hormones, the physical transformation happened quickly.

It's nearly impossible to tell that he's trans. My friends have said that they'd never know.

I haven't known what to tell my family. My sisters and my Mom are calling, asking where I've been. They want to know why I've been so scarce.

Frankly, I just haven't known how to handle it. I'm tempted just to introduce Lee as my boyfriend, and let them think he's a biological man.

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In some ways, it feels like it would be easier to avoid their questions and their judgment, and I know it would make them happy. In other ways, I feel that not telling the truth would be a betrayal of myself and of all my gay friends.

What do you think I should do?

—EVA

Dear Eva:

It's easy to see why you're tempted just to refer to Lee as your boyfriend without further explanation. You have the opportunity to cash in on heterosexual privilege, while still privately maintaining your somewhat queer identity.

It's also true that if you mention Lee was born a biological female, your family is likely to think of him as a woman no matter what else you say. But it's sad to think that you only can gain family acceptance by bringing home a man.

Lee may have strong feelings about whether to disclose his trans status, so your decision about whether to tell your family obviously should be made in consultation with him. He may want to be totally out about it, or he may want to be private. You'll need to work this out together.

If your family is as ignorant as you say, their acceptance of you—contingent upon your pretending to be heterosexual—will be a mixed bag.

Ultimately, you have to decide if you want the gratification of your family's support, even if it means you have to hide who you (and Lee) really are.

Under these conditions, the thrill of your family's newfound respect for you may wear off rather quickly, and their small-mindedness probably will reveal itself in other ways. **MERYL COHN**

© 2010 Meryl Cohn. Address questions and correspondence to <msbehavior@aol.com>. She is the author of Do What I Say: Ms. Behavior's Guide to Gay and Lesbian Etiquette (Houghton Mifflin). Signed copies are available directly from the author.

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